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Info

FROM: PARIS

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 2166, DECEMBER 10, 8 PM

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SENT DEPARTMENT 2166; REPEATED INFORMATION BERLIN 45, BONN 186, LONDON 451, MOSCOW 113.

REFERENCE: BONN'S 1204 TO DEPARTMENT.

IN DISCUSSION YESTERDAY AT FONOFF WITH LALOY, HE PROVIDED FOLLOWING INFORMAL FRENCH RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS POSED ON SOVIET NOTE IN PAPER GIVEN THREE AMBASSADORS IN BONN BY VON BRENTANO. LALOY SAID THESE VIEWS REFLECT WORKING-LEVEL OPINION IN FONOFF INCLUDING JOXE'S, BUT THAT COUVE DE MURVILLE IS STILL SOMEWHAT HESITANT AND HAS NOT APPROVED DEFINITIVE FRENCH POSITION ON BERLIN.

PARAGRAPH HEADINGS BELOW, TOGETHER WITH FRENCH VIEWS, ARE KEYED TO PARAGRAPHS IN REFTEL.

A. ANSWER TO SOVIET NOTE:

FRENCH BELIEVE SOVIET NOTE SHOULD BE ANSWERED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PREFERABLY IN DECEMBER. THERE MIGHT BE SOME ADVANTAGE IN HAVING THREE POWERS SEND JOINT TRI-PARTITE RESPONSE SINCE THIS WOULD EMPHASIZE ALLIED UNITY. REPLY SHOULD BE FAIRLY SHORT AND FACTUAL. NO INTERIM REPLY SHOULD BE SENT. IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO SUBMIT DRAFT REPLY TO FOREIGN MINISTERS IN PARIS.

B. CONTENT OF NOTE:

WESTERN REPLY

PERMANENT

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WESTERN REPLY SHOULD FIRMLY REJECT SOVIET PROPOSALS AND REAFFIRM SOLID LEGAL BASIS FOR ALLIES' PRESENCE IN BERLIN. QUADRIPARTITE ACCORDS REMAIN VALID AND CANNOT BE UNILATERALLY ABROGATED BY THE USSR. REPLY SHOULD NOT RPT NOT MAKE COUNTER-PROPOSALS ON BERLIN ITSELF. REPLY SHOULD MAKE CLEAR CONTINUED WILLINGNESS OF THREE ALLIES TO DISCUSS QUESTIONS OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION AND EUROPEAN SECURITY. HOWEVER, NO RPT NO NEW PROPOSALS SHOULD BE MADE IN THIS CONNECTION, SINCE ANY CHANGE IN BASIC WESTERN POWERS POSITION AS ADOPTED IN GENEVA IN 1955 AND ELABORATED SUBSEQUENTLY, COULD ONLY BE IN DIRECTION OF CONCESSIONS TO USSR.

C. DEFENSIVE MEASURES:

1. WHILE FRENCH ARE WILLING TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT QUESTION THEIR PRESENT INCLINATION IS THAT CURRENT CONTINGENCY PLANS IN EVENT GDR TAKES OVER AT CHECKPOINTS ARE ADEQUATE AND SHOULD NOT BE MADE MORE STRINGENT. FRENCH APPRECIATE THAT BERLIN OFFICIALS FEEL STRONGLY ON THIS POINT BUT FRENCH BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT BE SWAYED TOO MUCH BY LOCAL VIEWS; GENERAL PUBLIC OPINION, REACTION IN WEST SHOULD PROBABLY BE ADVERSE TO ACTION WHICH WOULD BE TOUGHER THAN CONTEMPLATED IN CURRENT CONTINGENCY PLANNING.
2. FOUR-POWER WORKING GROUP SHOULD BE CREATED AFTER FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE BUT FRENCH PREFER THAT THIS NOT BE IN BONN.
3. FRENCH ARE SYMPATHETIC TO IDEA OF PROPAGANDA MEASURES IN UNCOMMITTED WORLD AND BELIEVE THAT AIDE MEMOIRE SHOULD PROBABLY BE DELIVERED TO THIRD STATES.

D. FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE:

PRELIMINARY FRENCH

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PRELIMINARY FRENCH VIEW IS THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO
HAVE STRONG STATEMENT ON BERLIN IN NATO COMMUNIQUE RATHER
THAN IN SEPARATE QUADRIPARTITE DECLARATION ON BERLIN.

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